



**Memorandum**

**Date:** January 25, 2011

**To:** John Kovash, Mayor  
Members, West Linn City Council

**From:** Chris Jordan, City Manager *ej*

**Subject:** Security at Council Meetings

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With the recent shooting of Representative Giffords in Arizona, the shooting at a school board meeting in Florida, and the general tone of public discourse across the nation, security at public meetings has become an increasingly discussed topic. Police Chiefs across Oregon have been considering various models for providing adequate security for public officials at meetings. Attached is a memorandum from the Executive Director of Oregon Association of Police Chiefs regarding this issue.

As we are remodeling part of the Council Chambers, we may have an opportunity to take some measures that would assist with security. Chief Timeus and I have discussed this issue and have agreed that it warrants a brief discussion of the Council at your retreat (time permitting), or in the near future.

Attachment

**From:** Kevin Campbell [<mailto:kevin@victorygrp.com>]  
**Sent:** Monday, January 24, 2011 10:12 PM  
**To:** [activemembers@policechief.org](mailto:activemembers@policechief.org)  
**Subject:** SUMMARY OF FINDINGS...Safety and Security Measures



**oacp**@news

**OACP Update...**  
keeping you informed!

**To:** All OACP Members

**Re:** SUMMARY OF FINDINGS...Safety and Security Measures

The following "summary of findings" is provided to you by Lt. Chris Bolek in response to his recent inquiry regarding security and safety measures for public officials. The responses below included ideas that cover a broad range of security issues. Thanks to Lt. Bolek for providing the following summary:

Please keep in mind that the majority of this information is in response to the security and safety of the City Council and the public members that attend. Some agencies have also addressed security measures for all public meetings that are city sponsored ( Budget Committee, Traffic Safety Commission, Building and Planning, etc.)

Please also keep in mind that some cities have designated council chambers with fixed dais and other cities' council chambers are multi-purpose rooms where the council desks and chairs are set up and taken down regularly. In either case, there are some basic steps that can be taken and have been taken to increase the security of your respective city councilors, city staff and members of the public who attend these meetings.

I received responses from the following agencies:

Astoria PD  
Fairview PD  
Grants Pass DPS  
Gresham PD  
Hillsboro PD  
Lake Oswego PD  
Milwaukie PD  
Newport PD

Stayton PD  
The Dalles PD  
Tualatin PD  
West Linn PD

From these responses, the following is a summary of what I have learned and therefore suggest:

- The main commonality I found was that each department has at least one uniform police officer at their city council meetings. For many, it is the Chief or his / her designee. Some agencies have a minimum of two police officers at each city council meeting, on OT if necessary. We recently went to this security measure. One agency uses a uniformed officer and a plain clothes “undercover” officer if there is a contentious issue on the council agenda. The officers in attendance seat themselves in a place they believe most advantageous to engage a threat(s) and / or assist council members in quickly exiting the room.
- Some departments have installed Kevlar under or in front of the councilors’ desks so that the councilors can drop under the desk and have cover from gunshots. Others, have only a covering over the front of the councilors’ desks so at least they have concealment.
- The installation of wireless panic buttons available to every second or third councilor or, to the Mayor at a minimum. I believe that having more than one available is advantageous. Depending on your specific arrangements, these alarms can go to your communications centers, records staff, etc. One agency has their alarm go to a private alarm company.
- A physical barrier between the audience and the councilors and city staff. Some use stantions with webbing (like the lines at the airport), some departments use tables. It is recognized that this is really not a security measure or barrier per se, but it does help to create a mental barrier, some extra effort for a suspect to move maneuver past to get at councilors and staff, which translates into extra time to react and perhaps create space.
- The development of an action plan or tactical plan outlining what the councilors are to do and / or where they are to exit based on the situation and where to assemble after exiting the room, if there is more than one exit. Develop an action plan or tactical plan for the police officer(s) in the room and then for the officers who will be responding; basically an Active Shooter or Rapid Deployment response. Once the action plan is set, provide training to the councilors and city staff who will be in regular attendance at these meetings. The training typically includes a review of safety features or measures that have been taken and instructions on what to do in the event of an emergency. I believe an RBT Active Shooter scenario can be built and trained upon.

- In the event of a disruptive member of the public in the audience, some departments have made an arrangement with their Mayor that if the police request it, the Mayor calls a recess and the councilors exit the room, wherein the officer(s) can isolate the disruptive member of the public and separate the person (s) from the larger crowd of the audience, in an effort to minimize risk.

<b>Kevin Campbell</b> OACP Executive Director 1191 Capitol Street NE Salem, OR 97301	(503) 315-1411 Office (503) 580-9485 Mobile (503) 315-1416 Fax <a href="http://www.policechief.org">www.policechief.org</a>
	